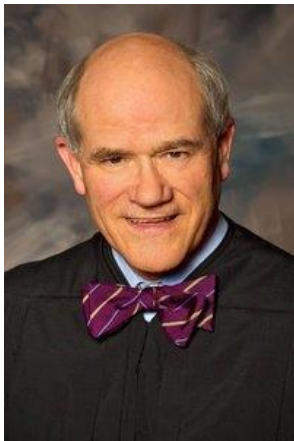


# **ELECTION: Supreme Court, Position 6 (Larson v. Wiggins)**

Oct. 11, 2016

Kitsap Sun



Charles (Charlie Wiggins)



Dave Larson

## **Supreme Court Justice Position 6**

*Incumbent: Charles Wiggins*

### **Dave Larson**

Age: 58

Background: Presiding judge; Federal Way Municipal Court; civil litigation attorney

### **Charles (Charlie) Wiggins**

Age: 69

Background: State Supreme Court Justice; Wiggins & Masters, private law firm in Kitsap County

**Q: Briefly explain why you are running.**

**Larson:** Right now, we do not have a statewide strategy on how the courts interact with other agencies of government when addressing problems such as mental illness, addiction, and domestic violence. This needs to change. I want to be a voice for reforms in the justice system that will institutionalize decency through the use compassion, dignity, and restorative justice.

As the former president of the 8th largest school district in the state and the architect of funding litigation. I am also keenly aware of what needs to happen to solve the state's long-standing funding problems in our schools.

I am concerned that some of the positions taken by my opponent do not take the reality of domestic violence and other crimes seriously.

Finally, I want to build bridges that will restore the trust and confidence of the other branches of government and the trial judges. Superior Court judges want to split off from the administrative arm of the Supreme Court and we need leadership on the Court that can rebuild our court system by bringing all judges together for a common purpose. We need to restore confidence in the state's highest court by interpreting the law and the Constitution as it is written without imposing my personal views or personal agenda on the people of this state. This is the only way that we can accomplish the agenda noted above.

**Wiggins:** Public service has always been an important part of my life and I enjoy serving the public full time as a Justice of the Supreme Court. I believe that everyone should put their talents to their highest and best use, which for me is serving on the Supreme Court. I wish to leave to my children a better society, guided by the best principles and policies I can find in the law. I firmly believe that we have done the right thing in the McCleary case, and one reason I want to continue to serve on the court is to continue to press the legislature to comply with the constitutional mandate that education of our children is the paramount duty of the state. A second issue that I'm concerned with is the role of the Supreme Court in protecting the rights of minorities. I have written opinions calling for revision of our procedures to give better protection to minority rights and I would like to see them implemented during my next term. Lastly, I want to continue to work to ensure that the poor have access to the courts to assert their rights. Throughout this, I hope to continue to call on the court to discern and implement the intent of the legislature when we interpret statutes.

**Q: What in your professional experience prepares you to be a Supreme Court judge?**

**Larson:** I have been a sitting trial judge for Federal Way Municipal Court for the past 8 years. Prior to that, I was the President of the Federal Way School Board and was the architect of Federal Way's Fair Funding lawsuit that challenged the constitutionality of teacher and staff salary funding. I was a trial attorney for 23 years handling complex civil cases in state and federal courts. I have a proven record of accomplishment of making organizations better by building bridges through confidence and trust. I took the position as a judge on Federal Way's court in a time of great controversy and turned the court around. I have been given recognition for my work in domestic violence prevention. As your justice, I will bring a fresh and needed perspective due to my trial court experience that gives me a keen understanding of the impact my decisions will have on the lower courts, law enforcement, and the public.

**Wiggins:** I have been a Justice on the Washington Supreme Court since 2011. This is a technical job with a steep learning curve. I was able to step right into the job by applying my extensive appellate experience.

The primary mission of the Supreme Court is to interpret and develop the law and the state and federal constitutions. We do this in the context of concrete cases, studying the party's briefs and the law. That is exactly what I have done prior to serving on the Court. I was an attorney specializing in appellate practice, a pro tempore judge, and a judge on the Washington Court of Appeals, Division II. I have forty years of legal experience, most of it focused on appellate issues. As an attorney, I have taught at over 100 seminars on various legal issues, primarily having to do with appellate practice. For ten years, I taught constitutional law to law school graduates preparing for the bar examination. I have published articles on the history of the Washington constitutional convention of 1889 and the constitution.

The Court also adopts court rules and enforces lawyer ethical rules. I served on the State Bar Court Rules and Procedures Committee, several years as chair, as well as considerable experience with lawyer discipline, having served on the Disciplinary Board and as a hearing officer.

**Q: Why are you the most qualified candidate in the race for this position?**

**Larson:** I am running for the position and not as much against my opponent. With that said, although we would both focus on making decisions on the cases that come before the Supreme Court, we part ways when it comes to the "perspectives" and "priorities" we each bring to the job.

Perspective: The court's decisions serve as the guidelines trial judges and lawyers must act within. Yet, my opponent has no real experience as a trial judge or as a trial lawyer. We feel the impact of this disconnect in the trial courts. I was a trial lawyer for 23 years

and have been a trial judge for 8 years. I will have a keen understanding of the impact that my decisions will have that my opponent does not.

Priorities: I want to be the eyes and ears of the trial courts, lawyers, and constituents so that I can be their advocate in Olympia and beyond on how the courts operate. We need to make the courts work for the citizens of this state. We need the equivalent of collective bargaining so that we can have the proper tools to address the needs of the court system and its constituents. My opponent has been passive on issues affecting the administration of justice.

**Wiggins:** Thirty-five years of practice prepared me for this job and I have been performing well during the past six years. But don't take my word for it — consider how I was rated by various bar associations around the state. I received the highest possible rating, Exceptionally Well Qualified, from the King County Bar Association, the Latino Bar Association, and the Joint Asian Bar Rating Committee. I received the next highest rating, Well Qualified, from the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and from Q Law. My ratings are all higher than my opponent's ratings.

Consider also that I have been endorsed by over 200 Washington State judges from all levels of court from all over the state, both presently serving and retired. These are the very people who read and apply the decisions I write and they approve of the job I am doing. My opponent did not even try to obtain endorsements from judges and has no judicial endorsements.

I've also been endorsed by statewide leaders including former Governor Christine Gregoire, Attorney General Bob Ferguson, King County Executive Dow Constantine, Mayor Ed Murray, former Chief Justices Gerry Alexander and Richard Guy, and by hundreds of individuals who approve of my carefully considered opinions. I've also been endorsed by many diverse groups, including the Washington State Labor Council, Washington Education Association, Washington Conservation Voters, Washington Federation of State Employees, Washington State Council of Firefighters. For a more complete list, visit [www.justicecharliewiggins.com](http://www.justicecharliewiggins.com).

### **Coverage:**

[Supreme Court candidates face off in Kitsap](#) (Kitsap Sun)

[Controversial school funding rulings prompt crowded Supreme Court races](#) (The News Tribune)

[State Supreme Court: Challengers face uphill run](#) (Seattle Times)